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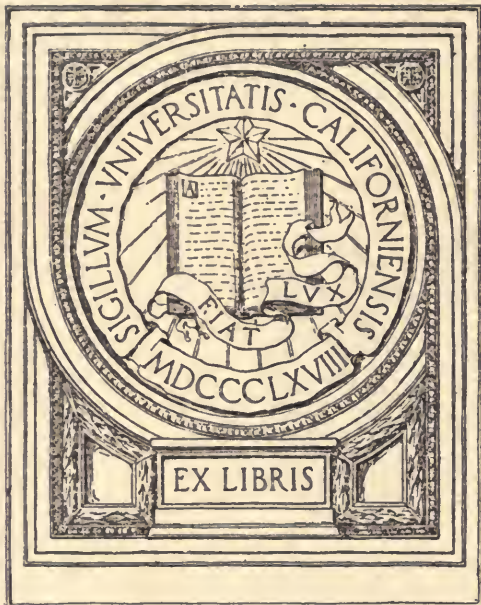
SOUTHERN BRANCH

ELOISA E.
epistle to
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Fine copy.
"This prof
attributed to F.
Lowndes.

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with fine por-
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to quote it."



JOHN FISKE

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A. Pond. Pinx.^t

Goldar Sculp.^t

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ELOISA

EN DISHABILLE.

* Moore, in his Life of Byron, says that this piece was really composed by Col. John Matthews of Herefordshire.



BEING
A NEW VERSION
OF THAT LADY'S CELEBRATED EPISTLE TO
ABELARD.

BY

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED

TO THAT RESPECTABLE FRATERNITY, OF WHICH THE

UNWORTHY MEMBER.

Projicit ampullas et sesquipedalia verba. Hor.

PRINTED BY J. WRIGHT,

Denmark-Court, Strand.

1801.

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TO THE

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MOST HONOURABLE AND WORSHIPFUL FRATERNITY

COMMONLY CALLED

THE LOUNGERS

OF

GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND.

Fiske 1926
MY LORDS AND GENTLEMEN,

not
PERMIT me with the utmost deference to lay this little Poem on your sofas, as you alone are the proper judges of its merit, and the most able patrons to afford it necessary protection. Although it is so much my interest to conciliate your favour, I scorn to attempt it by the hackneyed arts of common dedicators. I will not, therefore, say one word more in your praise than (what even your enemies must

allow) that you are the most ancient, most opulent, and most numerous society, now existing in these kingdoms.—With regard to antiquity, the free masons themselves cannot pretend to vie with you: from the clearest calculations it must appear, that your united property is far more considerable than that of the renowned association of the county of Y——: and as to your numbers, they will be found infinitely superior to the still more famous one lately assembled in St. G——'s Fields. I am not ignorant that it has been suggested by some prejudiced writers*, that your order is a mere modern institution: and though some have been content to deduce your origin from the sages of Greece, others have had the assurance to assert that it was first established at one of the learned universities, and no longer ago than the beginning of the present century: but

* Vide Spectator, No. 54.

a very little examination into the matter will effectually correct both these mistakes. It may perhaps be true, that the title by which you are now distinguished, might be assumed about the period your adversaries mention ; but the order itself, my Lords and Gentlemen, I will not scruple to declare, is coeval with mankind : our first parent, in his delightful state of indolent felicity, being, to all intents and purposes, the first Lounger. The immense wealth and incredible numbers of the society, at this day, must be obvious to every body, who is at all acquainted with His Majesty's dominions in general, or this great metropolis in particular. Such is the flourishing condition of this honourable fraternity in the British isles ; nor shall we find it in less estimation among the different nations upon the continent. In America, indeed, it must be owned that your ordinances, like some others, are not much attended to ; so

untractable is that stubborn generation. But the Eastern World affords a more agreeable prospect : if we may believe the reports of historians and travellers; those wise people have ever been, and continue to this day, in the genuine practice of your customs and manners, or have even refined upon them.

So much for the order in general : I now descend to myself. From experience, I well know your mortal antipathy to prefaces, introductions, and, in short, every species of prolegomena, by which an author settles preliminaries with his reader. I shall therefore take leave to insert here every thing necessary to be premised, in hopes that, as it is particularly addressed to yourselves, it may perchance attract your attention. Let not your Lordships and Worships be alarmed : I shall study all possible brevity, having as much aversion to the fatigue of writing, as you can have to that

of reading. In the first place, then, I assure you that this bagatelle was composed solely for your use ; nor do I desire any other reader whatever to proceed a step farther in the perusal. If, after this notice, Critics will shock their ears with the uncouthness of my versification, or the zealous admirers of Mr. Pope will undergo the mortification of seeing his fine thoughts barbarously murdered, they must take it for their pains. Let nobody, however, rashly conclude that I have any enmity to that immortal bard. Cotton might, perhaps, admire Virgil's beauties, though he chose to burlesque him ; and Hogarth certainly did not mean to disparage his own performance of Paul before Felix, when he painted the same subject in the ridiculous manner of Rembrandt. In general, I may venture to assert, that your Lordships and Worships have no great relish for the sublime : Pope's Epistle of ELOISA is, undoubtedly, a pretty

poem ; and its sentiments might afford you some amusement while under the hands of the friseur, if divested of that serious air they wear at present, and adorned with that nonchalance of which you are so fond. To afford you this gratification, I have dared to break through one of the established rules of your illustrious order ; and I have only to hope, that my good intentions may procure me your pardon for the flagrant offence of putting pen to paper.

I have the Honour to be,

With the greatest Respect,

My LORDS and GENTLEMEN,

Your Lordships' and Worships'

Most obedient,

Most humble, and

Most devoted Servant,

THE AUTHOR.



ELOISA
EN
D I S H A B I L L E;
BEING
A NEW VERSION
OF THAT LADY'S CELEBRATED EPISTLE TO
ABELARD.*

IMMUR'D in this prison, so dull and so moping,
Where vows and high walls bar all hopes of eloping,
Where close-grated windows scarce shew us the sun,
What means this strange itch in the flesh of a nun?
Why wander my thoughts in the midst of devotion?
Why feels my fond heart its long smother'd emotion?
Still

* In general the author endeavours to stick as close as possible to the original; wherever he wanders, the reader will please to observe, that either ELOISA uses the same sentiment in some other part of the epistle, or he takes the liberty of putting words into her mouth, which might naturally be expected from a young lady in her situation.

P O P E ' S

E L O I S A

T O

A B E L A R D.

I N these deep solitudes and awful cells,
Where heav'nly pensive Contemplation dwells,
And ever-musing Melancholy reigns ;
What means this tumult in a vestal's veins ;
Why rove my thoughts beyond this last retreat ?
Why feels my heart its long-forgotten heat ?

D

Yet

Still, still love prevails ! this unquenchable flame
Blazes fresh at the sight of my ABELARD'S name.

Dear name ! fatal source of my pain and my pleasure !
Let me hide it as close as a miser his treasure :
Coop it up in my heart, where those birds of a feather,
Warm love, warm devotion, sit perching together.
Already I've wrote it ! alas, I'd forgot it :
I'll weep on the paper in streams till I blot it :
Spite of tears and of prayers, my feelings so teaze me,
That my hand, too complying, endeavours to ease me.

Thrice dismal retreat ! where, 'midst gloom everlasting,
Our amusements are sighing, and fretting, and fasting.
Ye walls, full of cracks, though not ravag'd by time,
By yellow-fac'd virgins you're robb'd of your lime !*
Ye busts of old fathers, whose damp-streaming faces
Seem to pity my own and my lover's disgraces !
Tho' as stupid as you, I so steadfast look at you,
My feelings convince me I'm not quite a statue.

No—

* It appears that the monastery, to which ELOISA retreated, was built by ABELARD himself, consequently the injuries done to "PARACLETE'S *white* walls" are not unnaturally accounted for.

Yet, yet I love!—from ABELARD it came,
And ELOISA yet must kiss the name.

Dear fatal name! rest ever unreveal'd,
Nor pass these lips in holy silence seal'd:
Hide it, my heart, within that close disguise,
Where, mix'd with God's his lov'd idea lies:
O write it not, my hand—the name appears
Already written—wash it out my tears!
In vain lost ELOISA weeps and prays,
Her heart still dictates, and her hand obeys.

Relentless walls! whose darksome round contains
Repentant sighs, and voluntary pains:
Ye rugged rocks! which holy knees have worn;
Ye grotts and caverns, shagg'd with horrid thorn!
Shrines! where their vigils pale-ey'd virgins keep,
And pitying saints, whose statues learn to weep!
Though cold, like you, unmov'd and silent grown,
I have not yet forgot myself to stone.

All

No—still my blood boils, my passion still rages,
Notwithstanding my fasting and weeping for ages.

When I open thy letters, how trembles my frame!
How I sigh, how I weep at the sight of thy name!
When my own meets my eyes, the same tremors I feel—
Some woful misfortune treads close at its heel.
Through what painful extremes of sensation I run!
Now broiling a lover, now freezing a nun.

Yet let me, ah! let me conjure thee to write all
Thy woes, for I long for the shocking recital;
That sighs sympathetic with yours may combine,
And tears ever-flowing may water each line.
Does ABELARD hear my request, and yet lingers?
The close-clipping villains at least left thy fingers!
If love demands weeping, oh! why should I spare
Those floods, which of course must be lavish'd elsewhere*!
To happier tasks my swol'n eyes bid adieu,
Bereft of the pleasure of gazing on you.

By

* ELOISA here seems to allude to the well-known Greek inscription on an ancient marble, still to be seen in the Medicean gardens: *Θεμῶς εὐκρίθιλος εὐπίς*. Above it is an elegant figure in alto relievo, which the best connoisseurs suppose to be the representation of the melting Niobe, and that the fragment formerly belonged to one of the folding doors of the temple of APOLLO PALATINUS.

All is not Heav'n's while ABELARD has part,
Still rebel nature holds out half my heart;
Nor pray'rs nor fasts its stubborn pulse restrain,
Nor tears for ages taught to flow in vain.

Soon as thy letters trembling I uncloset,
That well-known name awakens all my woes.
Oh, name for ever sad! for ever dear!
Still breath'd with sighs, still usher'd with a tear.
I tremble, too, whene'er my own I find,
Some dire misfortune follows close behind.

Line after line my gushing eyes o'erflow,
Led through a sad variety of woe;
Now warm in love, now with'ring in my bloom,
Lost in a convent's solitary gloom!
There stern religion quench'd th' unwilling flame,
There died the best of passions, love and fame.

Yet write, oh write me all, that I may join
Griefs to thy griefs, and echo sighs to thine;
Nor foes nor fortune take this pow'r away:
And is my ABELARD less kind than they?
Tears still are mine, and those I need not spare,
Love but demands what else were shed in pray'r:

By sharing thy griefs, then, give ease to thy soul :
Alas ! sharing's too little—ah, give me the whole !
Heav'n first, in its mercy, taught mortals their letters
For ladies in limbo, or lovers in fetters.
With genuine heat they describe our desires,
Nor lose the least spark of our soul-melting fires :
At once on the delicate subject we rush,
Without e'en the trouble of seeming to blush :
Our souls they unite, though our bodies can't join,
And waft a warm sigh from the pole to the line.

You know how fond Love, in the artful disguise
Of Friendship's fair form, caught my soul by surprise:
Angelic I thought thee—some spirit ethereal !
Nor dream'd that the transports I felt were venereal !*
Delusion so gross I too soon understood,
Nor was griev'd to change spirit for warm flesh and blood.

When

* I have scarcely occasion to take notice, that this word is used in its *poetical*, not its *chirurgical*, signification.

No happier task these faded eyes pursue ;
To read and weep is all they now can do.

Then share thy pain, allow that sad relief ;
Ah, more than share it, give me all thy grief.
Heav'n first taught letters for some wretch's aid,
Some banish'd lover, or some captive maid ;
They live, they speak, they breathe what love inspires,
Warm from the soul, and faithful to its fires ;
The virgin's wish without her fears impart,
Excuse the blush, and pour out all the heart ;
Speed the soft intercourse from soul to soul,
And waft a sigh from Indus to the pole.

Thou know'st how guiltless first I met thy flame,
When Love approach'd me under Friendship's name ;
My fancy form'd thee of angelic kind,
Some emanation of th' all-bounteous mind.
Those smiling eyes attemp'ring every ray,
Shone sweetly lambent with celestial day.
Guiltless I gaz'd ; Heaven listen'd while you sung ;
And truths divine came mended from that tongue.*

From

* He was her preceptor in philosophy and divinity.

When you've press'd me to marriage, how oft have I said,
 What megrim has ABELARD got in his head ?
 How oft have I sworn how egregiously stupid
 Are laws, neither founded by nature or Cupid !
 So free is the god, if you once aim to bind him,
 He flies like a wretch with ten bailiffs behind him ;
 Let dull married dames boast of honour and riches,
 I care not a fig for such phlegmatic ----- ;*
 Enslav'd by no prejudice, dup'd by no fashion,
 My object alone is the genuine passion.
 If the world's mighty monarch should wedlock propose,
 At himself and his world I would toss up my nose :
 I hate drowsy joys betwixt waking and sleeping—
 No—let my dear ABELARD take me in keeping !

O state

* It is rather extraordinary that our heroine, when she speaks of the *pure* part of the sex, should be betrayed into a warmth, which prevents her from finishing the sentence, especially when we consider the *peculiar mildness* of *their* strictures on the misfortune of any frail sister, which happens to come to their knowledge.

From lips like those what precepts fail to move ?
Too soon they taught me 'twas no sin to love :
Back through the paths of pleasing sense I ran,
Nor wish'd an angel whom I lov'd a man.
Dim and remote the joys of saints I see ;
Nor envy them that heav'n I lose for thee.

How oft, when press'd to marriage, have I said,
Curse on all laws but those which love has made ;
Love, free as air, at sight of human ties,
Spreads his light wings, and in a moment flies ;
Let wealth, let honour, wait the wedded dame,
August her deed, and sacred be her fame ;
Before true passion all those views remove ;
Fame, wealth, and honour ! what are you to love ?
The jealous god, when we profane his fires,
Those restless passions in revenge inspires,
And bids them make mistaken mortals groan,
Who seek in love for aught but love alone.
Should at my feet the world's great master fall,
Himself, his throne, his world, I'd scorn them all :
Not Cæsar's empress would I deign to prove ;
No, make me mistress to the man I love ;

O state full of bliss—happy, charming condition,
 Where exquisite freedom gives zest to fruition !
 Each heart with the other in unison beating !
 In silent effusions, souls melting and meeting !
 Each craving allay'd, and brim-full ev'ry void !—
 Such—such were the raptures which once we enjoy'd.

Alas ! how we're chang'd, what dire horrors appear !
 See the flint-hearted rascals are seizing my dear !
 Stark naked—fast bound—stop, bloodhound, thy knife !
 Ah ! spare the sweet source of the balsam of life !
 Oh ! why was not I at the butchering scene ?
 This hand in a moment had rush'd in between :
 This hand too was guilty—sure that might atone,
 And save his dear flesh at the expence of its own.
 But what am I writing ?—the subject must **bore* ye :
 Too well you're acquainted with all the sad story.

That

* This word has happily survived the usual period of these *Ephemerides* of the fashionable vocabulary ;
 it, however, the Beau Monde should at length think fit to banish it, before this work itself is buried in
 oblivion,

If there be yet another name more free,
More fond than mistress, make me that to thee!

Oh! happy state! when souls each other draw,
When love is liberty, and nature law:
All then is full, possessing and possest,
No craving void left aching in the breast;
E'en thought meets thought ere from the lips it part,
And each warm wish springs mutual from the heart.
This sure is bliss (if bliss on earth there be),
And once the lot of ABELARD and me.

Alas, how chang'd! what sudden horrors rise!
A naked lover bound and bleeding lies!
Where, where was ELOISE? her voice, her hand,
Her poniard had oppos'd the dire command.
Barbarian, stay! that bloody stroke restrain;
The crime was common, common be the pain.
I can no more; by shame, by rage suppress'd,
Let tears and burning blushes speak the rest.

Canst

oblivion, let it be remembered, that between the years 1772 and 17—, the proper mode of expressing a dislike to any noun substantive, whether masculine, feminine, or neuter, was to pronounce him, her, or it, *a monstrous bore*; which immediately conveyed the sentiments of the speaker with great brevity and precision; whereby the intolerable fatigue of circumlocution was avoided. The verb in the text signifies of course, *to affect with disagreeable sensations*. The derivation I leave to more able Etymologists.

That day you remember, so solemn, so grievous,
When kind mother church op'd her arms to receive us ;
When warm in my blood to the altar I drew,
The shrines seem'd to tremble, the lamps to burn blue.
The heavenly choir look'd down with surprise,
And saints scarce could credit their ears or their eyes.
My vows not by grace, but thy love, were decreed,
And if I lose that, I'm a bankrupt indeed !

Then come—ease my woe with thy converse enchanting ;
Strong Fancy shall furnish whate'er may be wanting.
Once more let our limbs in fond rapture entwine,
And thy love-darting eyes shoot their beams into mine :
Whilst snatching ambrosial kisses I melt,—
Thy loss at that moment will scarcely be felt.
Ah, no ! thou shalt teach me my hours to employ
In mild contemplation of heav'nly joy.
Pure beauties celestial set full in my view,
And convince me they're more to be valu'd than you.

Ah,

Canst thou forget that sad, that solemn day,
When victims at yon altar's foot we lay?
Canst thou forget what tears that moment fell,
When, warm in youth, I bade the world farewell?
As with cold lips I kiss'd the sacred veil,
The shrines all trembled, and the lamps grew pale:
Heav'n scarce believ'd the conquest it survey'd,
And saints with wonder heard the vows I made;
Yet then, to those dread altars as I drew,
Not on the cross my eyes were fix'd, but you:
Not grace, or zeal, love only was my call;
And if I lose thy love, I lose my all!
Come! with thy looks, thy words, relieve my woe;
Those still at least are left thee to bestow,
Still on that breast enamour'd let me lie,
Still drink delicious poison from thy eye,
Pant on thy lip, and to thy heart be prest:
Give all thou canst—and let me dream the rest.
Ah, no! instruct me other joys to prize,
With other beauties charm my partial eyes;
Full in my view set all the bright abode,
And make my soul quit ABELARD for God.

Ah, think on thy flock, if more motives are wanting,
Neglect not to bend the young twigs of thy planting :
In the shape of dull spouses they scorn'd to obey men ;
To the church they retreated, too precious for laymen.
In vain the false world might attempt to beguile 'em
With thee the dear girls found a *harmless* asylum.
Eden seem'd to be open'd beneath thy protection,
E'en Envy must own 'twas a noble erection !
Mistake not my meaning—I speak of the building—
Here is seen no profusion of painting or gilding,
But rais'd plain and neat from your private finances,
Without chousing rich sinners with pious romances,
Or teaching the wretches that purchasing prayers
Would amply compensate for starving their heirs.

Here lock'd up for ever, thy presence supply'd 'em
With a sweet *succédaneum* for pleasures deny'd 'em.
But now they're quite alter'd—some pitiful mourner
Sits sobbing or pouting in every corner.
See how I make use of my friend's supplication,
Like souls laid to bleach in the fires of purgation.

But

Ah ! think at least thy flock deserves thy care,
Plants of thy hand, and children of thy pray'r.
From the false world in early youth they fled,
By thee to mountains, wilds, and deserts led.
You rais'd these hallow'd walls ; the desert smil'd,*
And Paradise was open'd in the wild.
No weeping orphan saw his father's stores
Our shrines irradiate, or emblaze the floors ;
No silver saints, by dying misers giv'n,
Here brib'd the rage of ill-requited heav'n :
But such plain proofs as piety could raise,
And only vocal with the Maker's praise.
In these lone walls, (their day's eternal bound)
These moss-grown domes with spiry turrets crown'd,
Where awful arches make a noon-day night,
And the dim windows shed a solemn light ;
Thy eyes diffus'd a reconciling ray,
And gleams of glory brighten'd all the day.
But now no face divine contentment wears,
'Tis all blank sadness, or continual tears.

See

* He founded the Monastery.

But why should I use these poor arts to conjure you ?
For who, if I fail, shall attempt to allure you ?
No more, then, I'll trust to the interest of others—
Come, thou dearest of friends, most beloved of brothers !
With the fondest, the humblest of names I'll assail !
Let thy sister, thy daughter, thy servant prevail.
More than these, as thy love I'll implore—then I've done—
Which is each tender title united in one.
The pines, which so tall shoot oblique from the mountains,
The grottos and clefts, with their chrystalline fountains,
The soft dying zephyrs, that pant on the groves,
All give me some hint of our ill-omen'd loves.
So ingenious is grief in augmenting its woes,
Each object around me disturbs my repose.
Blue devils, curst crew, perch in crowds on the trees,
Flap their wings o'er the grave-stones, and howl in the
breeze :
Or else in sad silence, these envious powers
Strip the green of its hue, of their lustre the flowers,
On every face spread an air of dejection,
And tinge ev'ry scene with their hateful complexion.

Yet

See how the force of others' pray'rs I try,
(O pious fraud of am'rous charity !)
But why should I on others' pray'rs depend ?
Come thou, my father, brother, husband, friend !
Ah ! let thy handmaid, sister, daughter, move,
And all those tender names in one, thy love !
The darksome pines that o'er yon rocks reclin'd
Wave high, and murmur to the hollow wind ;
The wand'ring streams that shine between the hills,
The grotts that echo to the tinkling rills,
The dying gales that pant upon the trees,
The lakes that quiver to the curling breeze ;
No more these scenes my meditation aid,
Or lull to rest the visionary maid.
But o'er the twilight groves and dusky caves,
Long sounding aisles and intermingled graves,
Black Melancholy sits, and round her throws
A death-like silence, and a dread repose ;
Her gloomy presence saddens all the scene,
Shades ev'ry flow'r, and darkens ev'ry green,
Deepens the murmur of the falling floods,
And breathes a browner horror on the woods.

Yet here must I pine to the end of my life :
In obedience a mistress shall cope with a wife.
When death shall have granted a friendly quietus,
And the scurrilous world shall no longer maltreat us ;
When you too have reach'd the full length of your tether,
No uncles shall bar us from pigging together.
'Tho' close—with fierce rapture no more we shall glow,
But lie like old AUSTIN embracing his snow.*

Whilst living, however, in spite of my vows,
My heart still revolts at a spiritual spouse.
On the spot where pale Chastity, queen of decorum,
Holds her fortress, her citadel, Sanctum Sanctorum,
Where outworks abandon'd, she often retires,
Love fixes his standard, and lights up his fires.
'Tis true, I lament, but, alas ! I must own
Not my fault, but thy loss, is the object alone.
No less vain are my pray'rs ; my wild wishes defeat 'em :
Whilst I weep for my crimes, I am ripe to repeat 'em.

If

* Saint AUGUSTIN invented this droll method of allaying his obstreperous passions. The curious may be informed of more minute particulars, by applying at the Saint's Cave, in Earl TEMPLE'S Gardens at Stow.

Yet here for ever, ever must I stay ;
Sad proof how well a lover can obey !
Death, only death, can break the lasting chain ;
And here, e'en then, shall my cold dust remain,
Here all its frailties, all its flames resign,
And wait till 'tis no sin to mix with thine.

Ah, wretch ! believ'd the spouse of God in vain,
Confess'd within the slave of love and man.
Assist me, heav'n ! but whence arose that pray'r ?
Sprung it from piety, or from despair ?
E'en here, where frozen Chastity retires,
Love finds an altar for forbidden fires.
I ought to grieve, but cannot what I ought ;
I mourn the lover, not lament the fault ;
I view my crime, but kindle at the view,
Repent old pleasures, and solicit new ;

Now

If I think on the sin to excite my contrition,
Each pulse in my frame beats alarm to fruition.
To forget the dear guilt is a hopeless endeavour ;
The girl who once tastes, must remember for ever.
Then aid me, ye casuists, some means to discover
To hate the vile passion, yet doat on the lover :
A conquest so hard there's no female can boast,
Who, pierc'd to the quick, and in ecstasy lost,
Like poor ELOÏSE has been destin'd to prove
The heart-thrilling shock of the arrow of love.
Before such a soul its lost peace can regain,
How oft must it love, and how often disdain !
Now hoping, despairing, and constantly fretting,
Regretting, resenting, but never forgetting !
But if once they've *a call*, how they're chang'd in a minute,
So quick, you would swear some enchantment was in it !
Those souls, which by love were converted to tinder,
Catch flame at religion, and burn to a cinder.
O come, by thy precepts I'll shun ev'ry evil,
And set at defiance the flesh and the devil :
From my heart the dear image thyself shalt erase,
And heal up the wound with the balsam of grace :

None

Now turn'd to heav'n, I weep my past offence,
Now think of thee, and curse my innocence.
Of all affliction taught a lover yet,
'Tis sure the hardest science to forget !
How shall I lose the sin, yet keep the sense,
And love th' offender, yet detest th' offence ?
How the dear object from the crime remove,
Or how distinguish penitence from love ?
Unequal task ! a passion to resign,
For hearts so touch'd, so pierc'd, so lost as mine.
Ere such a soul regains its peaceful state,
How often must it love, how often hate ?
How often hope, despair, resent, regret,
Conceal, disdain—do all things but forget ?
But let heav'n seize it, all at once 'tis fir'd ;
Not touch'd, but rapt ; not waken'd, but inspir'd !
Oh come ! oh teach me nature to subdue,
Renounce my love, my life, myself—and you,
Fill my fond heart with God alone, for he
Alone can rival, can succeed to thee.

None else for the task can equivalent be,
It shall fall, like tough AJAX, *a felo de se*.

In a convent secluded, how happy the maid,
Whom no recollections of folly upbraid.
Her tranquil repose there, no passions can shock,
But torpidly snug, as a toad in a rock,
By no soft seducer she's tempted to err,
Nor cares for the world more than it cares for her.
Mere forms of the place are her sighing and weeping,
Blest visions seraphic amuse her when sleeping:
Eden's rose, ever gay, crowns the favour'd adorer,
And fluttering cherubs shed essences o'er her.
For nuptials divine preparation appears,
And *Epithalamia* resound in her ears.
Whilst heav'nly harps tune their sprightliest strain,
She melts without languor, and sighs without pain.

I, too, have my visions ; but not such as these
Are the raptures that solace the lost ELOISE.
Those jewels, which vengeance had thirsted to sever,
Rise fair to my view more engaging than ever !

Then

How happy is the blameless vestal's lot ?
The world forgetting, by the world forgot :
Eternal sunshine of the spotless mind !
Each pray'r accepted, and each wish resign'd :
Labour and rest that equal periods keep ;
Obedient slumbers that can wake and weep ;
Desires compos'd, affections ever even ;
Tears that delight, and sighs that waft to heav'n.
Grace shines around her with serenest beams,
And whisp'ring angels prompt her golden dreams.
For her th' unfading rose of Eden blooms,
And wings of seraphs shed divine perfumes ;
For her the spouse prepares the bridal ring ;
For her white virgins hymeneals sing ;
To sounds of heav'nly harps she dies away,
And melts in visions of eternal day.

Far other dreams my erring soul employ :
Far other raptures of unholy joy :
When at the close of each sad, sorrowing day,
Fancy restores what vengeance snatch'd away,

Then

Then conscience from nature exacts no submission :
Unshackled I spring to the dear apparition !
O Night, by thy veil what *manœuvres* are hidden !
How poignant the relish of pleasures forbidden !
From my soul I believe that the father of lies
Sends his imps to provoke me like * huge Spanish flies.
I see you, I hear you, my arms then I glue t'ye,
And rove with delight o'er each masculine beauty.
On the margin of pleasure ecstatic I revel,—
When away flies the shade whence it came—to the devil.
Once more I compose me, in hopes to recover
The charming illusion that brought me my lover ;
Once more I behold him, but not as before,
Kind flattering Fancy deceives me no more.
For now, dreary wastes, and bleak mountains among,
We wander, and weep, as we tramp it along :
Now round some old mouldering ruin we ramble,
Then up the steep cliffs of the ocean we scramble :

From

* ELOISA's idea is strikingly similar to that of the great DOCTOR BAYNYARD, who held the devil himself *in propria personâ*, to be no other than a great bouncing *Cantharis*. Vid. Trist. Shand. Vol. V.

Then conscience sleeps, and leaving nature free,
All my loose soul unbounded springs to thee.
O curs'd, dear horrors of all-conscious night !
How glowing guilt exalts the keen delight !
Provoking dæmons all restraint remove,
And stir within me ev'ry source of love.
I hear thee, view thee, gaze o'er all thy charms,
And round thy phantom glue my clasping arms.
I wake—no more I hear, no more I view,
The phantom flies me, as unkind as you.
I call aloud ; it hears not what I say :
I stretch my empty arms ; it glides away.
To dream once more, I close my willing eyes !
Ye soft illusions, dear deceits, arise !
Alas, no more ! methinks we wand'ring go
Thro' dreary wastes, and weep each other's woe,
Where round some mould'ring tow'r pale ivy creeps,
And low-brow'd rocks hang nodding o'er the deeps.

From the top on a sudden you mount in the air !
 Clouds close round the phantom—I'm left in despair :
 Winds howl, and waves roar ; then from tortures ideal,
 I wake at the tumult, to those that are real.

For thy comfort the Fates, in severity kind,
 When they punish'd thy body, gave ease to thy mind :
 Thy blood, half-congeal'd, can no longer inspire,
 Like mine, the fierce blaze of unsated desire,
 So sluggish it creeps, in such slow, even streams,
 Night ne'er tantalizes with liquorish dreams ;
 Each morn you may meditate clerical duties,
 Undisturb'd by the spur of a * *signum salutis*.

Then why, my dear friend, is this distance between us ?
 You're dead in the eye of the statutes of VENUS :
 Her genial warmth you're unable to feel :
 Nature, spite of the proverb,† is conquer'd by steel.

Religion

* AS ABELARD had instructed his fair pupil in the *learned languages*, and in *philosophy*, *natural* as well as *moral*, we are not to be surprised at her displaying a degree of *knowledge* uncommon in the fair sex.

† “ *Naturam expelles furca, tamen usque recurret.*”—I think no apology necessary for inserting this very common adage in an explanatory note, as it may have escaped the memory of some of my readers.

Sudden you mount, you beckon from the skies ;
 Clouds interpose, waves roar, and winds arise,
 I shriek, start up, the same sad prospect find,
 And wake to all the griefs I left behind.

For thee the Fates, severely kind, ordain
 A cool suspense from pleasure and from pain :
 Thy life a long dead calm of fix'd repose ;
 No pulse that riots, and no blood that glows,
 Still as the sea, ere winds were taught to blow,
 Or moving spirit bade the waters flow ;
 Soft as the slumbers of a saint forgiv'n,
 And mild as op'ning gleams of promis'd heav'n.

Come ABELARD ! for what hast thou to dread ?
 The torch of Venus burns not for the dead.
 Nature stands check'd ; Religion disapproves ;
 E'en thou art cold—yet ELOISA loves.

Ah !

Some late writers have been blamed for exhibiting their own erudition in a prolixity of annotation, in utter contempt of *their* readers' sagacity. This censure I hope to avoid. If I were troubled with the *cacœthes annotandi*, I have here a fine opportunity of indulging myself in an elaborate dissertation to prove that HORACE's *ferk* was not, in fact, a *wooden* one : but this is a matter I am very little anxious about. "When two handles are presented to us, we are at liberty to seize that which happens to be most convenient."

Religion and nature conspire to dash one,
Yet still ELOISA sticks firm to her passion ;
Flames equally fruitless and lasting are mine
As those, which surround a dead saint in his shrine.

Thy image pursues me wherever I rove,
From the grove to the cell, from the cell to the grove :
At the altar itself the prophane would surmise
Strange thoughts in my breast, if they look'd at my eyes.
Curs'd concatenation—each anthem that's sung,
Brings back to my fancy thy musical tongue ;
Then tapers, priests, altars, no more can I see—ah !
They vanish at once at thy charming idea.
In reverie rapt, flaming oceans confound me,
Regardless of all that is passing around me.

Whilst weeping, and prostrate in penitence humble,
A glimpse of grace dawning, in ashes I tumble,
Come here, if thou dar'st, so bewitching and winning,
Blot out ev'ry trace of this hopeful beginning ;

With

Ah, hopeless, lasting flames ! like those that burn
To light the dead, and warm th' unfruitful urn.

"What scenes appear where'er I turn my view !

The dear ideas, where I fly, pursue,

Rise in the grove, before the altar rise,

Stain all my soul, and wanton in my eyes ;

I waste the matin lamp in sighs for thee ;

Thy image steals between my God and me ;

Thy voice I seem in ev'ry hymn to hear ;

With ev'ry bead I drop too soft a tear.

When from the censor clouds of fragrance roll,

And swelling organs lift the rising soul,

One thought of thee puts all the pomp to flight,

Priests, tapers, temples, swim before my sight :

In seas of flame my plunging soul is drown'd,

While altars blaze, and angels tremble round."

While prostrate here in humble grief I lie,

Kind, virtuous drops just gath'ring in my eye ;

While praying, trembling, in the dust I roll,

And dawning grace is op'ning on my soul :

With a glance, in a moment, dissolve into air
 The fruits of my sorrow, the hopes of my pray'r ;
 Stop me short in my way to the mansions above,
 And help the young devils to give me **a shove*.

No—fly me, to farthest antipodes fly me !
 Neither write to me, think of me, much less come nigh me.
 I renounce all your promises,—oaths I annul—
 Of ev'ry demand here's a quittance in full.
 Ah ! sweet tempting looks (even now I've an eye t'ye)
 Religion prevails, and I bid a good bye t'ye.
 Come Grace, ever tranquil, come heavenly Virtue !
 No carnal alloy for the future shall hurt you ;
 Faith and Hope, with your samples of pleasure celestial,
 Vouchsafe in my purified bosom to rest ye all !

See

* It may not be amiss to inform my fair readers, who may happen to find themselves in ELOISA'S case, that the most excellent BAXTER, that truly pious writer, has opposed his Herculean shoulders to the efforts of this mischievous race, in a work which he emphatically entitles, his "Shove to heavy ~~z~~—'d Christians."

Come, if thou dar'st, all charming as thou art !
Oppose thyself to heav'n, dispute my heart ;
Come, with one glance of thy deluding eyes,
Blot out each bright idea of the skies ;
Take back that grace, those sorrows and those tears ;
Take back my fruitless penitence and pray'rs ;
Snatch me, just mounting, from the bless'd abode ;
Assist the fiends, and tear me from my God !

No, fly me, fly me, far as pole from pole ;
Rise Alps between us ! and whole oceans roll !
Ah, come not, write not, think not once of me,
Nor share one pang of all I felt for thee.
Thy oaths I quit, thy memory resign,
Forget, renounce me, hate whate'er was mine.
Fair eyes, and tempting looks, (which yet I view !)
Long lov'd, ador'd ideas, all adieu !
O Grace serene ! oh Virtue heav'nly fair !
Divine oblivion of low-thoughted care !
Fresh-blooming Hope, gay daughter of the sky !
And Faith, our early immortality !
Enter each mild, each amicable guest ;
Receive and wrap me in eternal rest !

See

See sad ELOISE sitting squat on a tomb,
Uneasy support for a delicate b--- !
Fix'd here, as I watch'd the dim lamps all alone,
Methought a low voice broke beneath from the stone :
“ Come, sister,” it cried, “ here, sister, thy place is ;
“ No longer sit sobbing and making wry faces.
“ From thyself up to EVE, our first mother, inclusive ;
“ We have all had a *goût* for those *apples* delusive.
“ Thy fate and my own have exactly resembled ;
“ I pray'd, yet I long'd, then I tasted and trembled ;
“ But now with these follies no longer we're tainted,
“ Under earth we're at rest, and on earth we are sainted.”

Kind voice, I obey—Bring your palms and your roses !
I long for th' asylum where endless repose is.
May'st thou, my dear friend, the last duties bestow,
And smooth my descent to the regions below.
Even then, as you've oft, mark the roll of my eyes,
From my quivering lips catch my soul as it flies !
And to finish the whole with a spice of thy function,
Give my last languid motion love's ultimate unction !

--Ah !

See in her cell sad ELOISA spread,
Propt on some tomb, a neighbour of the dead.
In each low wind methinks a spirit calls,
And more than Echoes talk along the walls.
Here as I watch'd the dying lamps around,
From yonder shrine I heard a hollow sound.
“ Come, sister, come!” (it said, or seem'd to say),
“ Thy place is here, sad sister, come away !
“ Once, like thyself, I trembled, wept, and pray'd,
“ Love's victim then, though now a sainted maid :
“ But all is calm in this eternal sleep ;
“ Here grief forgets to groan, and love to weep ;
“ E'en superstition loses ev'ry fear ;
“ For God, not man, absolves our frailties here.”

I come, I come ! prepare your roseate bow'rs,
Celestial palms, and ever blooming flow'rs.
Thither, where sinners may have rest, I go,
Where flames refin'd in breasts seraphic glow :
Thou, ABELARD ! the last sad office pay,
And smooth my passage to the realms of day ;
See my lips tremble, and my eye-balls roll,
Suck my last breath, and catch my flying soul !

---Ah ! no---that's impossible,---surely I rave---
 Far away be such thoughts from the brink of the grave.
 In solemn canonicals gravely array'd
 Mayst thou draw near the bed where thy mistress is laid,
 At distance respectful then mournfully stand,
 Whilst a torch (but not Cupid's) shall shake in thy hand ;
 See the last rosy tint in my countenance deaden !
 My eyes, once thought piercing, now perfectly leaden !
 Convulsive emotions, that us'd to delight you,
 Now chang'd to contortions that freeze you and fright you !
 To gaze on such charms at this horrible time
 Must be surely a lesson, instead of a crime.

When you in life's *opera reach the *finale*,
 May no agonies writhe you, no terrors appal ye :
 On a chariot of clouds may bright cherubims place you,
 And canoniz'd virgins descend to embrace you ;

One

* Life has often been compared to tragedy, comedy, and farce ; the author flatters himself that the simile of *an opera*, considering ABELARD's situation, will be thought more apposite than any other species of the drama.

Ah, no—in sacred vestments mayst thou stand,
The hallow'd taper trembling in thy hand,
Present the cross before my lifted eye,
Teach me at once, and learn of me to die.
Ah then, thy once-lov'd ELOISA see!
It will be then no crime to gaze on me.
See from my cheek the transient roses fly!
See the last sparkle languish in my eye!
Till ev'ry motion, pulse, and breath be o'er;
And e'en my ABELARD be lov'd no more.
O Death, all eloquent! you only prove
What dust we doat on, when 'tis man we love.

Then, too, when Fate shall thy fair frame destroy,
(That cause of all my guilt, and all my joy),
In trance ecstatic may thy pangs be drown'd,
Bright clouds descend, and angels watch thee round;
From op'ning skies may streaming glories shine,
And saints embrace thee with a love like mine.

May

One social tomb our cold relics shall hide,
 Each name down Time's current together shall glide ;
 And in some future age if their whimsical lot
 Should guide two fond lovers to this sacred spot,
 On this monument leaning they'll sigh *tête-à-tête*,
 Shed floods of warm tears for our terrible fate,
 Then mutually cry, "Whate'er evil attend us,
 "From the knife of a *FULBERT kind Venus defend us !"
 In the midst of high mass if some wandering eye
 Should stray to this marble and heave a soft sigh,
 One would hope a weak female might soon be forgiv'n,
 If these stones for a moment should steal her from heav'n.
 And in Time's teeming womb if a bard should be found,
 Whose soul feels like mine an incurable wound ;
 Who passions as keen too susceptibly knows,
 Let him paint in † sad numbers our heart-breaking woes :
Then

* ELOISA's uncle.

† All puns on this *melancholy* line are hereby forestalled. *Caveat Criticus !*

May one kind grave unite each hapless name,
And graft my love immortal on thy fame !
Then ages hence, when all my woes are o'er,
When this rebellious heart shall beat no more ;
If ever chance two wand'ring lovers brings
To Paraclete's white walls and silver springs,
O'er the pale marble shall they join their heads,
And drink the falling tears each other sheds ;
Then sadly say, with mutual pity mov'd,
" Oh may we never love as these have lov'd !"
From the full choir when loud hosannas rise,
And swell the pomp of dreadful sacrifice,
Amid that scene, if some relenting eye
Glance on the stone where our cold relics lie,
Devotion's self shall steal a thought from heav'n,
One human tear shall drop, and be forgiv'n.
And sure, if Fate some future bard shall join,
In sad similitude of griefs to mine,
Condemn'd whole years in absence to deplore,
And image charms he must behold no more ;
Such if there be, who loves so long, so well,
Let him our sad, our tender story tell ;

'Then to sooth my pale ghost as an offering bring 'em ;
He, who feels 'em the strongest, is fittest to sing 'em.

FINIS.



The well-sung woes will sooth my pensive ghost:
He best can paint 'em who shall feel 'em most.

F I N I S .



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